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NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION. A four-alarm fire in an engine room at one of NYC's largest wastewater treatment plants resulted in [raw sewage being released into the rivers](#) surrounding Manhattan Island July 20. The 120-mgd (450-ML/day) plant was taken offline about five hours after the fire started. Two of the plant's five pump engines were back in service by Saturday afternoon, which is sufficient for dry weather volumes, but a fire in an electrical utility manhole early Sunday morning knocked out power, stopping those pumps again. The pumps were running again by mid-afternoon, allowing resumption of primary treatments and chlorine disinfection. Secondary treatment was beginning to come online Sunday, and DEP was installing additional "pump-around" capacity to deal with other operational problems. The [North River plant](#), built in 1986, is one of 14 plants serving the city. The [New York Times reported](#) workers speculated that the fuel-fed fire may have begun when a turbocharger overheated and broke.

AQUA AMERICA & AMERICAN WATER. [Aqua America announced an agreement with American Water Works Co.](#) July 11 to purchase all of American Water's regulated operations in Ohio and to simultaneously sell Aqua's regulated operations in New York to American Water. Both companies are now the largest investor-owned water utilities in each of the two respective states. The transaction means Aqua America will purchase from American Water eight water systems and one wastewater system in Ohio (approximately 50,730 water and 6,550 wastewater connections) for approximately \$120 million. The systems serve parts of nine counties primarily in central and northeast Ohio. The acquisition will increase the customer base of Aqua Ohio by approximately 66 percent.

In a separate agreement, Aqua America has agreed to sell its seven water systems in New York (serving 50,520 customers) to American Water's New York subsidiary for approximately \$71 million, making Long Island American Water the state's largest investor-owned water utility. Aqua America's sale of its New York operations will conclude its regulated operations in that state.

LOUISVILLE WATER CO. The [boil water advisory was lifted](#) the afternoon of July 14 for the last of 75,000 residents of Louisville, Ky., affected by a 48-in (1200-mm) water main break. The city's news release said [the break occurred Monday evening](#), July 11, flooded the University of Louisville's Belknap campus, and left customers — including much of downtown — with no water or low pressure. However, the structural integrity of a nearby freeway overpass was not compromised.

SAN DIEGO. Mayor Jerry Sanders officially launched [San Diego's water reuse pilot project](#) June 30. The year-long \$11.8 million pilot project is the Californian city's next step towards indirect potable water reuse. The 1-mgd (4-ML/day) pilot facility built next to the North City Water Reclamation Plant will test purifying the reclaimed water into water clean and safe enough to drink. After testing, the finished product will be pumped back into the reclaimed water system for industrial use, meaning none of the water in this pilot study will be put into the city's drinking supply. The city covered the cost of the pilot study by temporarily hiking water rates by 3 percent between January 2009 and September 2010.

LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF WATER & POWER. LADWP has launched a public education campaign on its need for higher water and energy rates by scheduling two webinars — one for commercial customers and another for residential customers — along with a website: [LA Forward](#)

brought city's water
superintendent back to area

» TEC volunteers pass
baton

» Maximize Your
Membership

QUICK TAKES

» GAO: SDWA violations
underreported



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[Rates Process: Engineering A New Era](#). "The water and power industry is undergoing a total transformation, and LADWP is at the epicenter. We're entering a period unprecedented since the industrial revolution as new legal mandates change the way we do business and the need to replace aging water and power infrastructure to maintain strong reliability places further pressure on our financial resources," says one utility official.

OKLAHOMA CITY. The extraordinary pressure on Oklahoma City's water system caused by severe drought and [triple-digit temperatures was blamed for a break in a 60-inch](#) (1500-mm) water main. Residents were banned from any outdoor watering from July 18 until the [pipe was repaired July 20](#).

HILTON HEAD PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT. Hilton Head (S.C.) PSD has received a [Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting](#) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The award, which is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, is for the PSD's 2010 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The report was judged to demonstrate a spirit of full disclosure and to have effectively communicated the utility's "financial story" in a way that motivated readership of the report, according to the association.

SAN ANTONIO WATER SYSTEM. The [National Geographic Society published an article](#) highlighting the success of water sustainability and environmental stewardship efforts in San Antonio, Texas. As the cheapest source of "new" water, conservation is an essential part of San Antonio's [50-year Water Management Plan](#). Each year, SAWS works to conserve 1 billion gallons (4×10^9 L) of water through [programs and incentives](#) for residential and commercial customers. And it's working — San Antonio is using the same amount of water now as it did 25 years ago, despite a 67 percent increase in customers.

FUKUSHIMA, JAPAN. A [Veolia Water press release](#) (July 11) announced that the decontamination system co-developed by AREVA and Veolia Water for the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant has reached the milestone of 18,000 tons (16×10^6 kg) of highly-radioactive waters treated to date — 15 percent of the accumulated volume. The system was designed, constructed and launched in a record-short time of two months, helping stabilize the plant, improving access for workers and allowing recirculation of cooling water. More than 200 AREVA and 60 Veolia experts from France, Germany, the United States, Japan and Sweden were mobilized following Japan's devastating earthquake and tsunami.

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